World Health Organisation (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control: Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products

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The Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs adopted the report by Martina ANDERSON (GUE/NGL, UK) on the draft Council decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products to the World Health Organisation's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, as regards its provisions on obligations related to judicial cooperation in criminal matters and the definition of criminal offences.

The committee recommended the European Parliament to **give its consent** to the conclusion of the Protocol.

In a short justification accompanying the recommendation, Members stated that the World Heath's Organisation protocol on the Illicit Trade in Tobacco should be immediately ratified by the European Union. Its objective is the elimination of all forms of illicit trade in tobacco products.

To recall, the Protocol:

- targets the supply chain of tobacco products via a series of measures by governments (e.g. creation of a global tracking and tracing regime within five years of entry into force of the Protocol,
- establishment of a global information sharing point located in the Secretariat of the World Health Organisation Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, creation of national and regional tracking and tracing systems);
- insists upon additional provisions aimed at addressing the supply chain of illicit tobacco products. These include; licensing, record keeping requirements and regulation of internet-sales, duty-free sales and international transit;
- establishes offences, address liability and seizure payments as well and the disposal of confiscated products;
- encourages and enhances international cooperation, valid information sharing, technical and law enforcement cooperation, mutual legal and administrative assistance;
- outlines particular obligations regarding the tobacco industry. Parties to the Protocol must make each and every interaction with the tobacco industry fully transparent.